

REMARKS

A. Background

Claims 28-39 and 41 were pending in the application at the time of the Office Action with claims 38, 39, and 41 being withdrawn from consideration. Claims 28, 30-34, 36, and 37 were rejected as being obvious over cited prior art. Claims 29 and 35 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. By this response applicant has amended claim 28; cancelled claims 38, 39, and 41; and added new claims 42-44. As such, claims 28-37 and 42-44 are presented for the Examiner's consideration in light of the following remarks.

B. Proposed claim Amendments

Claim 28 has been amended to recite "securing a placenta of an animal against a panel having a substantially planar first face." This amended is supported at page 6 of the application as originally filed. New claim 42 is supported at page 7 of the application as originally filed. New claim 43 is the combination of original claims 28 and 29. New claim 44 is the combination of original claims 28, 33, and 35. In view of the foregoing discussion, applicant submits that the amendments to the claims do not introduce new matter and entry thereof is respectfully requested.

C. Rejection on the Merits

The Office Action rejects claims 28, 30-34, 36, and 37 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,004,322 to Spendlove in view of what the examiner considers to be obvious to those skilled in the art. The Office Action asserts that the step of "securing a placenta of an animal against a substantially planar first face, as originally recited in claim 28,

reads on a user “pressing the placenta in ones hands.” While applicant does not concede the rejection, applicant has herein amended claim 28 to recite “securing a placenta of an animal against **a panel** having a substantially planar first face.” Applicant asserts that a “panel” does not read on a user’s hand and, as such, claim 28 is not obvious over the cited prior art.

Claims 30-34, 36, and 37 depend from claim 28 and thus incorporate the limitations thereof. As such, applicant submits that claims 30-34, 36, and 37 are distinguished over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as discussed above with regard to claim 28. Applicant further submits that new claim 42 is not obvious over the cited prior art in that the prior art does not disclose or suggest a panel “comprised of a metal, plastic, composite, or combination thereof,” as recited in claim 42.

The Office Action objects to claims 29 and 35 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but states that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. New claim 43 is the combination of original claims 28 and 29. As such, applicant submits that new claim 43 is allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 29 was considered allowable in the Office Action. New claim 44 is the combination of original claims 28, 33, and 35. As such, applicant submits that new claim 44 is allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 35 was considered allowable in the Office Action.

No other objections or rejections are set forth in the Office Action.

D. Conclusion

Applicant notes that this response does not discuss every reason why the claims of the present application are distinguished over the cited prior art. Most notably, applicant submits

that many if not all of the dependent claims are independently distinguishable over the cited prior art. Applicant has merely submitted those arguments which it considers sufficient to clearly distinguish the claims over the cited prior art.

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration and allowance of claims 28-37 and 42-44 as amended and presented herein.

In the event there remains any impediment to allowance of the claims which could be clarified in a telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate such an interview with the undersigned.

Dated this 5th day of June 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana L. Tangren", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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